

375

PERSONNEL MANUAL

BOARD OF FOREIGN MISSIONS
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Personnel Manual
of the
Board of Foreign Missions
of the
Methodist Episcopal Church

CONTENTS

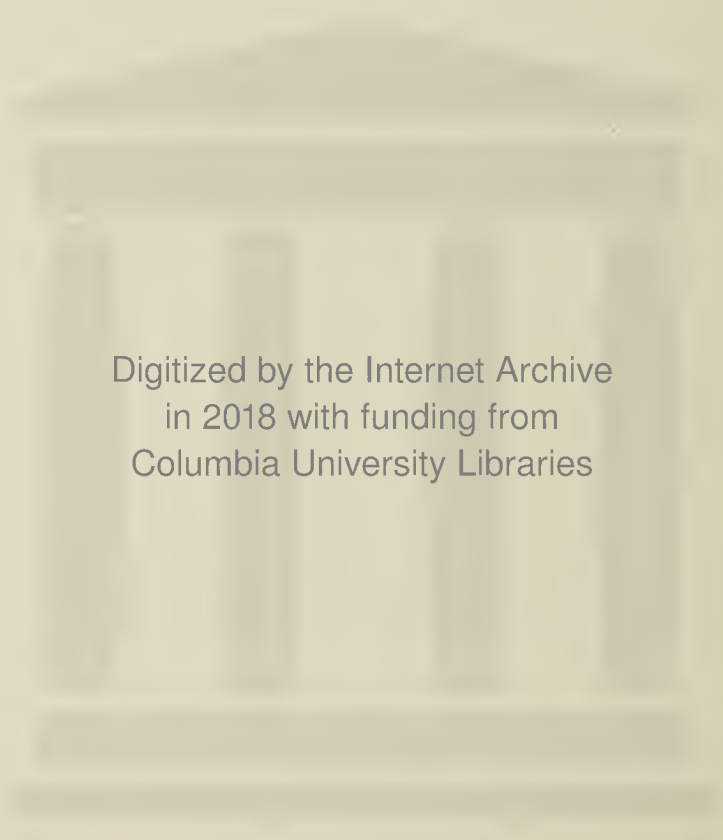
I. THE FOREIGN MISSIONS OF THE CHURCH	7
II. TYPES OF WORK	7
III. QUALIFICATIONS OF PERSONNEL.....	9
1. In General	
2. In Particular	
(1) The General Missionary	
(2) The Missionary Educator	
(3) The Constructing Engineer	
(4) The Industrial Missionary	
(5) Missionary Physician	
(6) Missionary Nurse	
3. Other Qualifications	
(1) Business Training	
(2) Apt to Teach	
(3) Adaptability	
(4) Age for Service	
IV. TERM OF SERVICE	13
V. WHEN TO APPLY	14
VI. HOW TO APPLY	15
VII. REQUIRED PAPERS	16
Application	
Statement	
Medical Report	
Photographs	
VIII. PAPERS OF WIFE OR FIANCÉE.....	18
IX. RELATIONSHIP TO THE WORK	19
Acceptance	
Assignment	
Appointment	

X. CORRESPONDENCE AFTER ASSIGNMENT .	20
XI. TRAINING CONFERENCES.....	20
XII. SUPPORT	21
Basis of Support	
Time When Support Begins	
Contract Teachers	
XIII. DEBTS.....	21
XIV. PASSPORTS AND TRAVEL EXPENSES....	22
XV. RELATION OF MISSIONARIES TO THE BOARD	22
XVI. KNOWLEDGE OF THE VERNACULAR LANGUAGE.....	23
XVII. APPEALS FOR GIFTS	24

INTRODUCTION

No Christian can rightly choose his life work without prayerfully considering the claims of foreign missions. The Board of Foreign Missions seeks to acquaint men and women fully with the needs and opportunities of such service, and it desires that they may honestly consider enlistment in it.

In the following pages will be found brief statements regarding the needs of, the qualifications and regulations for service in fields where the Board is actively at work.



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I. The Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church

The Board of Foreign Missions is conducting mission work on five continents, in the following countries:

Asia, Eastern: China, Japan, Korea.

Asia, Southeastern: Straits Settlements, Java, Sumatra, Borneo and the Philippines.

Asia, Southern: India, Burma.

Africa: Algeria, Angola, Belgian Congo, Liberia, Madeira Islands, Portuguese East Africa, Rhodesia and Tunisia.

Europe: Austria, Baltic Provinces, Bulgaria, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Jugo-Slavia, Norway, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland.

Latin America: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Peru and Uruguay.

In these great mission areas there are more than 1,200 missionaries of the Board. The fields have a great variety of climates, people, governments, religions and social environments.

II. Types of Work

1. The Main Purpose of All Phases of Missionary Work is identical, namely, the building of Christ's Kingdom throughout

the world. Nevertheless, the growth of the work in modern times has developed certain well defined lines of work resulting in a differentiation of service and requiring special training. There is the work of ordained missionaries, educational missionaries, doctors and nurses, industrial and agricultural workers, business agents and their assistants. In addition to these there is need of architects and builders, pharmacists, dentists, printers, superintendents of dormitories, and many others whose activities and services are exceedingly important and necessary in carrying forward the whole program of mission work.

2. **The Need** is written over the life of the race. There are spiritual destitution and moral poverty everywhere. Particularly is this the case in foreign mission lands where men are in the grasp of social and moral forces and problems without the means for their solution. There is a ceaseless quest for light and an undying call for help. The very knowledge of this great human need is a challenge to the Christian Church which must be met.

There has always been an urgent need for strong men and women in the missionary work of the church. The great Centenary Movement of the Church tremendously increased the funds for, and the need of workers for all types of activity carried on

by the Board. What was formerly the ordinary demand has been multiplied three or four times.

III. Qualifications of Personnel

1. **In General:** No other work makes greater demands upon the spiritual, intellectual and physical attainments of men and women than does foreign mission service. In order to meet these demands there is required an exceedingly high type of Christian character, of intellectual training and experience, of wisdom and common sense successfully to present the Gospel, together with the vitality necessary to meet the trying conditions of foreign work.

2. **In Particular:** We mention some of the qualifications needed for the more general branches of service:

(1) **The General Missionary** has duties which ordinarily include not only preaching, and the training of preachers, but the whole work of a religious engineer: that is, the supervision of a growing religious community, including schools, finances, mission property, etc. He should therefore have a good college education, a full course in a theological seminary, or other graduate school, and some practical experience in teaching, preaching or business.

(2) **The Missionary Educator** should

have a college education, with normal training and a certain degree of successful experience as a teacher. A few positions are open for high school graduates, *provided* they have also had a thorough normal training and teaching experience, and can supply recommendations for excellent service rendered.

(3) **The Constructing Engineer:** One who goes out as an Architect and Constructing Engineer should have a degree from the Department of Architecture or Engineering in a University, and have had some practical experience in actual construction work.

(4) **The Industrial Missionary:** For the work of an Industrial Missionary, the prospective missionary will need a degree from a School in Arts and Trades, with proven ability to do the required work, and, if possible, some work in teaching.

The man who goes as an Agriculturist should be, if possible, a graduate of college with postgraduate work in agriculture, or at least of a full four year course in an agricultural college. He should have some practical knowledge and experience in actual farm management and business administration.

A knowledge of tools and machinery is a decided asset for every missionary, regardless of the particular type of work which he performs.

(5) **A Missionary Physician** may be in charge of a hospital, or he may be responsible for a wide area of visitation work. On the medical side, the work of a missionary physician is most exacting, since it often covers the entire range of medicine and surgery without aid and consultation. The missionary physician should, therefore, be a graduate both of a college and of a Class "A" medical school, with interne experience, preferably of a general nature. During postgraduate study emphasis should, if possible, be placed on some specialty, such as internal medicine, surgery, eye diseases, orthopedics, and, more rarely, gynecology, obstetrics, and nerve diseases. He has little time, as a rule, for sermons or religious addresses, yet because of the exceptional opportunity which he has for breaking down prejudice and of reaching religiously those he is called to serve, he should be a man of definite spiritual and religious experience and purpose.

(6) **Missionary Nurse:** The missionary nurse should be a graduate of a complete hospital course of the highest class, and preferably with some experience in hospital management. She should also be a graduate of a high school at least, and, where possible, of a college, with a course in a missionary training school, and be especially skilled in operating room technique

with some competence in obstetrical nursing.

3. Other Qualifications. (1) **Business training.** All classes of missionaries are urged to acquaint themselves with methods of business administration and of book-keeping, which cannot fail to be of lasting benefit to all who may give attention to such subjects. Medical missionaries should not neglect this important training.

(2) **Apt to Teach:** Missionary service is often largely made up of teaching the Word. Sometimes such service is the only means of reaching the people. Frequently it is the most fruitful of all missionary effort. For these reasons all candidates should have mastered thorough courses in Bible study and have some practical experience in teaching.

(3) **Adaptability:** In addition to the foregoing, the missionary should be able to adapt himself to whatever circumstances or conditions he may find; to do team work harmoniously with his associates, including those whose views on many points may not agree with his own; to be quick to recognize his own faults and limitations rather than the shortcomings of others, to be careful and absolutely honest in all financial matters, to pay sufficient attention to neatness, attractiveness and appropriateness in personal habits and appearance, and in

every matter to be and act the Christian. Good nature, courage, optimism, a sense of humor and a generous consideration for the feelings of others are indispensable in missionary work.

(4) **Age for Service:** Missionaries should be appointed when between twenty-three and thirty-three years of age. The educational and practical experience required makes it unusual to send out a younger person, while the difficulty of acquiring an adequate use of the language makes it questionable to send out those who are much over thirty. There are exceptions, however, in both directions and in view of particular circumstances, as in cases of those who go for educational or pastoral work in the English language. Correspondence is invited on this point in order that a fair decision may be reached.

IV. Term of Service

Life Service: Missionaries can reach the point of highest service only when they have acquired a facile use of the language and become thoroughly acquainted with the social and moral conditions of the people to whom they go. In many countries where civilization is backward, it often takes years for a missionary to obtain that knowledge. It is therefore hoped that all who enter upon the service of the Board will give many

years to the work, and, if possible, their lives to the cause. The first term of service on the field is usually for five years, depending on the climate and other conditions, after which a year of furlough at home is provided.

Shorter Term: With the rapid development of educational and industrial development on mission fields has come an increasing demand for workers to go out for shorter terms, usually of from three to five years. Such workers enter the service under special arrangement with the missions to which they go, the terms of which definitely fix their support and relationship to the mission. Many of these workers later take up the study of the language, and are frequently recommended for regular missionary service.

V. When to Apply

Formal application should be made at least a year before one expects to complete his training. A friendly relation running through several years, however, furnishes the best possible ground for reaching a satisfactory decision as to service and field. The exact time for application, therefore, can be best determined in correspondence with the Board or the Life Service Bureau.

It is desirable that an assignment to the field be made from eight months to a year

before sailing. The best time for most sailings to the Orient is in mid-summer. For Southern and Central Africa and parts of South America, during the winter and spring months.

VI. How to Apply

Preliminary Correspondence is conducted as a rule through the Life Service Commission of the Methodist Episcopal Church. After preliminary correspondence, this Commission will send formal application and medical blanks to each wishing to go as a missionary. These blanks should be filled out promptly, in accordance with instructions given, and returned to the Commission. Where necessary, correspondence may be conducted direct with the Board whose officers will be in constant communication with the Church's Life Service Commission.

Upon the return of these blanks, references will be communicated with and the papers will be presented to the Personnel Committee of the Board of Foreign Missions. This Committee meets once a month. The prospective missionary will be asked to meet this Committee or one of its auxiliary local Committees. The latter reports to the Personnel Committee of the Board, by which final action is taken and communicated to the prospective missionary. If the

decision is favorable, the official notification thereof is sent by the Corresponding Secretary of the Board.

VII. Required Papers

1. The Following Papers Are Required:

A formal application.

A Statement of "Motives."

A medical report.

A photograph.

2. The Application Form. The information desired in response to the questions contained in the application form is essential for the advice and decision of the Board and for its records in case of acceptance of the applicant for missionary service.

3. A Brief Statement on "Motives" should be prepared with special care and frankness; it should tell why the writer desires to go as a missionary. Frank statements should also be made of any special doctrinal views which may be held by the prospective missionary, together with a statement of his attitude toward non-Christian religions.

4. Health Examinations: Good health is absolutely requisite to successful foreign work. The Board therefore takes the utmost pains to find if the prospective missionary is physically sound. It is to his advantage to co-operate with the Board in

this matter, holding back no information and objecting to no measure of investigation. A preliminary certificate of health by the family physician, if he is available, or by some good local physician, should accompany the first application form, together with a personal health questionnaire. Later when the applicant is in one of the cities where the official examiners of the Board are resident, a more complete medical examination will be made by the official examiner. This may be done at the time of meeting the Personnel Committee or one of its Advisory Committees. The final decision will be based on the advice of the Medical Department of the Board.

It happens not infrequently that the prospective missionary is asked to go to a specialist for the correction of a weakness which has been revealed by the examination. In case of long delays after assignment, a new examination may be required before sailing. It is advisable to have the teeth and eyes examined, and any difficulties corrected, before taking the medical examination.

The Board requires vaccination against small-pox, and inoculation against typhoid fever every two years. The former should be attended to before the final examination and the latter before sailing. If the small-pox vaccination "takes," re-vaccination is

not required for five years. A doctor's certificate of vaccination and typhoid inoculation is required, and should be received by the Medical Department at least one month before sailing. Our own Medical Department will attend to this in New York, without charge, if desired.

5. **Photographs:** A good individual picture suitable for reproduction is required by the Board, and should be sent with the application. Cabinet size photographs are the best for the purpose.

VIII. The Papers of Wife or Fiancée

The wife or fiancée should make out full papers in addition to those of her husband or fiancé. The Board regards her as a missionary in her own privilege and right. The wife of a missionary may be asked to take immediate charge of some form of educational or medical work on the field. She may do important evangelistic work among women and children. She usually finds immediate service in connection with native churches and Sunday schools, in the vicinity of her home station. If occupied largely in the care of her children and home, such a Christian home may be the finest exemplification of our religion. She may receive her individual appointment to a specific task from the presiding Bishop, and become at once a working member of the

Women's Conference on the field. She should seek some specific training in a special line of work and take some special training on the field, including the study of the language. In any event, her husband's case as a missionary is largely involved in her own.

IX. Relationship to the Work

It is important that the prospective missionary shall get clearly in his mind the three steps of his possible relationship to the work:

1. **Acceptance** by the Board, which makes the prospective missionary eligible for assignment and appointment.

2. **Assignment**, which relates a missionary to a particular mission of the Board, and enables him to begin his preparation for the journey and for the work to which he has been assigned.

3. **Appointment** to a particular place or work in a mission. This can be made only by the presiding Bishop of the Mission or Conference to which the missionary has been assigned; provided, that in the absence of the Bishop, the Superintendent of a District may temporarily make an appointment under the provision of the Discipline. In making an appointment care is exercised to secure the position for which the missionary is best fitted, and where he may hope for

the largest possible service. All appointments are subject to revision year by year in Annual or Mission Conference sessions, with a view to securing the best possible results in the work.

X. Correspondence After Assignment

After missionaries have been assigned to their particular fields, correspondence regarding the date of sailing, journey, field, passports, outfits, etc., should be addressed to the Corresponding Secretary, through whom they will receive full information regarding their future field of work.

XI. Training Conferences for New Missionaries

A Training Conference is held in June annually for newly appointed missionaries. This Conference is of utmost value and attendance is required. The program covers matters which vitally affect the missionary's usefulness. The acquaintance between officers of the Board and new missionaries, brought about by the Conference, is of very large advantage. The spiritual value of the meeting also is marked. Accepted missionaries should make their plans early with reference to being free for this Conference. The Board pays the necessary expenses involved in attendance upon the Conference.

XII. Support of Missionaries

1. **The Support Paid** to missionaries is not uniform for all countries, because of the variation in the cost of living. The aim is not financial return, but a proper provision for a comfortable living with reasonable economy. So far as practicable, all missionaries are placed on the same general financial basis, small increases being allowed for length of service and for each child in a family.

2. **Support Begins.** The support of a missionary usually begins when the Board directs him to give up other employment and come exclusively into the service and under the direction of the Board.

3. **Contract Teachers** who are sent by the Board for shorter terms are on a different basis of support, which begins on the date of arrival on the field. As a rule, those serving this shorter term receive no furlough allowance.

XIII. Debts

Many Volunteers are Burdened With Debts acquired in the process of getting an education. Usually appointment is deferred until the debt can be liquidated or satisfactorily arranged for. The officers of the Board are glad to give advice and encouragement, but prospective missionaries are

expected to devise their own plans for overcoming such difficulties. They should be scrupulously careful to see that all claims are either cancelled or satisfactorily arranged for before they leave for the field.

XIV. Passports and Travel Expenses

Information regarding the issuance of passports, travel and transit expenses will be found in the "Manual of Travel," issued by the Board.

XV. Relation of Missionaries to the Board

The Missionaries Are the Board in Action: The Board at home exists only for the purpose of promoting the work on the field to which the missionaries devote their lives. Missionaries err if they speak of themselves as "employed by the Board." So long as one bears the Board's commission he cannot separate himself in his acts from the Board's work. This view of the missionary's life is one taken not only by the Board and its officers, but by those with whom the missionaries come in contact, both in this land and in the mission fields. The whole foreign work of the church is judged by the work, the character, the bearing and the spirit of the missionaries who represent the Board. An unworthy act of a missionary brings discredit upon the Board, the

church and its work, to the country from which he comes, and upon the religion of Jesus Christ; while creditable and distinguished service contributes to the joy, satisfaction and honor of all. This applies to the personal conduct of the missionary and to his means and methods of work.

XVI. Knowledge of the Vernacular Language

The Board Regards the Ability to Speak the vernacular language as an indispensable qualification for missionary service. To aid in securing this, the missions are required to provide adequate Language Examination Committees, for the examination of all missionaries at the close of the first, second and third years of service, and at such other times as the missions may deem wise. Such examinations are usually provided for through the Examining Committees appointed at the Annual and Mission Conferences in the field where the Board is at work. Exemption from these requirements is allowed in cases where missionaries are assigned to work in which use of the vernacular language is not required. A failure to acquire the use of the language in the first three years of service is generally sufficient ground for refusal to ask for the return of a missionary for a second term of service.

XVII. Appeals for Gifts

After acceptance by the Board, missionaries are not permitted to make special appeals for the support of their work without first having secured permission therefor from the Corresponding Secretary. For information concerning the method of support and the conduct of the work on the field, consult the "Manual for Missionaries," published by the Board.

